



NEWS

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Airport Takes Next Steps for Cleaner Air in San José

SJC to increase Alternative Fuels Program by converting fleets to compressed natural gas with help from VTA and Air Board grants

SAN JOSE, CA – Mineta San José International Airport (SJC) will increase its commitment to cleaner air by arranging up to \$1.3 million in new funding for two projects that will enhance the airport's publicly accessible compressed natural gas fueling station and provide more incentives to assist owners of taxis and shuttle vans to convert vehicles to CNG.

Upgrades to the airport's CNG fueling station, estimated to cost \$727,000, will increase its capacity, efficiency, reliability, and accessibility both for the airport's fleets and the general public. Completion of this project is expected by the end of this year.

In addition, over the next two years SJC's Alternative Fuel Grant Program will maintain its support for the CNG conversion of up to 55 additional vehicles with larger incentive grants of \$4000 per taxi and \$8000 per shuttle van to fleet owners that are permitted to operate at the airport. The program is estimated to cost \$555,000, with up to \$400,000 coming from vehicle operators.

These steps are assisted with a new grant of \$606,000 from Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority and Bay Area Air Quality Management District. SJC will match the grant with a funding commitment of \$275,000. The San José City Council approved accepting the grant yesterday.

"Air quality is a key component to a healthy San José. Enabling airport fleets to run on natural gas will help decrease greenhouse gas emissions as well as reduce our dependency on foreign oil," said Mayor Chuck Reed. "In addition, this conversion is a critical step in helping accomplish San José's Green Vision goal of having 100 percent of city vehicles run on alternative fuels."

"As a board member for both the Air Quality District and VTA, I'm pleased we're teaming up with the airport for this clean air grant," said Palo Alto City Council Member Yoriko Kishimoto. "Together we can greatly enhance the airport's environmental efforts as well as provide a benefit to environmentally conscientious individuals choosing to use alternative fuels."

Since 2005 SJC has encouraged clean air conversion of taxis by permitting CNG taxis to operate every day at the airport instead of only alternate days that gasoline-fueled taxis are allowed. As a result, the number of CNG taxis working at SJC has already increased from fewer than 30 in mid-2005 to 130 vehicles today, and they now account for more than 40 percent of all taxi trips from the airport compared to six percent in 2005.

Since 2003, the Airport also has been able to eliminate the use of more 1.3 million gallons of diesel fuel through its conversion of its own shuttle bus fleet to CNG. This has saved over \$3 million in fuel costs and annually reduced vehicle exhaust emissions by over 70 tons.

The Airport received \$700,000 from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District in 2002 to replace twenty diesel shuttle buses with CNG-fueled shuttles. It will complete the conversion of the remainder of its fleet this spring with the scheduled replacement of another fourteen diesel shuttles with the help of another BAAQMD grant of \$700,000.

SJC opened its state-of-the-art compressed natural gas station in August 2003, which is also open for use by the general public and commercial fleets with CNG vehicles. The fueling station originally cost \$3,100,000, for which the Airport received grants totaling \$750,000 from the California Energy Commission and VTA.

As the owner of its own CNG fueling station, SJC provides direct benefits to both its ground transportation operations and the public because the airport can take advantage of incentives, grants and programs that allow it to pass cost savings on to taxis, other fleets, and other privately-owned vehicles. For example, SJC now receives more than \$200,000 annually from federal excise tax credits on CNG fuel dispensed from its station as a result of the Energy Policy Act of 2005.

The airport's clean air efforts were recognized in 2007 with a national achievement award from NGV America, a national trade association that promotes alternative-fuel vehicles, and by the American Lung Association in 2004.

SJC's partners for its successful alternative fuels program include Pacific Gas and Electric Company, Silicon Valley Clean Cities Coalition, Bay Area Air Quality Management District, California Energy Commission, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority, NGV America, and Alternative Fuel Vehicle Institute.

About Mineta San José International Airport

Mineta San José International Airport, a self-supporting enterprise, is owned and operated by the City of San José. SJC served 10.7 million passengers and handled approximately 209 million pounds of air cargo in 2007. SJC has 166 flights a day on

13 domestic and international carriers to 30 nonstop destinations.

For more airport information, visit www.sjc.org, or call Airport Customer Service at (408) 501-0979. Motorists can also tune their radios to 530 AM within two miles of SJC for current information on airport traffic, parking and security.

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